AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace Paragraph **[0005]** with the following paragraph rewritten in amendment format:

[0005] The use of blow molded plastic containers for packaging hot fill beverages is well known. However, a container that is used for hot fill applications is subject to additional mechanical stresses on the container that result in the container being more likely to fail during storage or handling. For example, it has been found that the thin sidewalls of the container deform or collapse as the container is being filled with hot fluids. In addition, the rigidity of the container decreases immediately after the hot fill liquid is introduced into the container. After being hot filled, the heat set containers are capped and allowed to reside at generally about the filling temperature for approximately five (5) minutes. The containers, along with the product, are ~~is~~ then actively cooled so that the filled container may be transferred to labeling, packaging and shipping operations. As the liquid cools, it evaporates and shrinks in volume. Thus, upon cooling, the volume of the liquid in the container is reduced. This product shrinkage phenomenon results in the creation of a negative pressure or vacuum within the container. Generally, this negative pressure or vacuum within the container ranges from 1 – 300 mm Hg less than atmospheric pressure (i.e., 759 mm Hg – 460 mm Hg). If not controlled or otherwise accommodated, these negative pressures or vacuums result in deformation of the container which leads to either an aesthetically unacceptable container or one which is unstable. The container must be able to withstand such changes in pressure without failure.

Please replace Paragraph **[0006]** with the following paragraph rewritten in amendment format:

[0006] Due to the relative high cost of PET material, even slight increases in the weight of the material of the container will result in an excessive increase in its cost, making it less competitive in relation to the glass bottle, thereby resulting in the infeasibility of such a solution to the problem. Additionally, in many instances, container weight is correlated to the amount of the final vacuum present in the container after this fill, cap and cool down procedure. In order to reduce container weight, i.e., "lightweight" the container, thus providing a significant cost savings from a material standpoint, the amount of the final vacuum must be reduced. Typically, the amount of the final vacuum can be reduced through various processing options such as the use of nitrogen dosing technology, minimize head space or reduce fill temperatures. One drawback with the use of nitrogen dosing technology however is that the <u>maximum</u> ~~minimum~~ line speeds achievable with the current technology is limited to roughly 200 containers per minute. Such slower line speeds are seldom acceptable. Additionally, the dosing consistency is not yet at a technological level to achieve efficient operations. Minimizing head space requires more precision during filling, again resulting in slower line speeds. Reducing fill temperatures limits the type of commodity capable of being used and thus is equally disadvantageous.